



DFG Marine Patrol Boats Protect California's Oceans

Each day, the California Department of Fish and Game's (DFG) marine patrol proudly lives up to its motto, "Make a Difference."

To maintain this creed, DFG is increasing its presence on the ocean with five new patrol boats. In August, 2004 DFG Director Ryan Brodrick christened the Department's fleet of five state-of-the-art marine patrol boats at a dedication ceremony in Berkeley. Stationed along the coast in major ocean ports, the vessels will enhance the Department's ability to enforce the laws that protect ocean resources against environmental violations off the 1,100-mile California coast.



The five vessels are 58-foot catamarans and are equipped with twin 660-horsepower diesel-powered engines. Each one features cutting-edge technology and speed. Vessels were purchased with funds from the Marine Life Management Act and through legislative appropriations.

The five newly-christened vessels replace some of DFG's larger offshore patrol boats. Using newer and more efficient foil-supported catamaran designs, the new vessels are capable of responding at almost twice the speed, and are more fuel efficient and less costly to operate than their predecessors.

The following are the five new patrol vessels (P/V) and the areas they cover:



- P/V Marlin, Berkeley - San Francisco Bay to Fort Bragg, as well as offshore waters and the Farallon Islands.
- P/V Steelhead, Monterey - Monterey to San Francisco, including the Farallon Islands.
- P/V Swordfish, Ventura - San Luis Obispo County waters in the north to Los Angeles County in the south, as well as around the Channel Islands.
- P/V Coho, Long Beach - Los Angeles basin including the Channel Islands.
- P/V Thresher, Dana Point - All ocean waters from the California/Mexico border to Point Conception, and out to Catalina and San Clemente Islands, as well as all offshore waters.

With the addition of the new patrol boats, the DFG's fleet of enforcement vessels now totals seven. Already online are the P/V Albacore, based out of Eureka and covering the waters from

Crescent City to Fort Bragg, and the P/V Bluefin from Morro Bay, which patrols the waters from Monterey to Pt. Conception.

Each of the new boats carries an 18-foot Zodiac Hurricane skiff and operates an "A" frame hoist system for safe launch and retrieval of the skiff in rough seas. During normal ocean tours, which may last several days, the vessels will carry a permanent crew of four. Each boat includes a lieutenant as skipper, two boarding officers, and a motor vessel engineer.

All of the new boats are capable of patrolling up to 200 miles offshore and have a range of 550 miles per trip. By coordinating the patrol activities of the DFG's fleet with twin-engine aircraft spotters through high-level communication systems, DFG's patrol boats will have overlapping support and can be used for many other types of law enforcement activities, including Homeland Security efforts.

In addition to helping carry out the Department's enforcement mission to enforce current regulations and legislative mandates, these new patrol boats and their crews will also provide Department scientists with research and resource management support, assist with search-and-rescue operations, and respond to major pollution incidents.